



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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WHOOPIING COUGH CASES CREEPING UP *Tdap Boosters Are New Middle and High School Requirement*

The region's pertussis cases for 2011 increased to 279 this week including one in which a San Diego student may have exposed others to the highly contagious disease, the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency said today.

This week's new case of pertussis, also known as whooping cough, where there was a potential for public exposure is: a 9-year-old who is up-to-date with immunizations and attends Francis Parker School in San Diego. Last year, whooping cough cases reached a record 1,144 cases for the county, including two infant deaths.

"The best protection against whooping cough for students is the childhood pertussis series and then later the Tdap booster," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. "A new California state law just went into effect this month that requires middle and high school students to provide proof of having received the booster shot before starting school."

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) released two public service announcements to provide more information for parents about the new law. The English version is available here:

<http://bit.ly/kTLRMX>, and the Spanish version can be seen at <http://bit.ly/iZVoy5>.

Residents without a regular healthcare provider can get vaccinated at a HHSA Public Health Center. The CDPH recommends a pertussis booster vaccine (Tdap) for everyone 10 years or older who has not yet received it, especially women of childbearing age, before, during, or immediately after pregnancy; and other people, including household contacts, caregivers, and healthcare workers, who have contact with pregnant women or infants. Children 7 to 9 years of age who did not receive all of their routine childhood shots are recommended to receive a Tdap booster dose.

A typical case of pertussis starts with a cough and runny nose for one to two weeks, followed by weeks to months of rapid coughing fits that sometimes end with a whooping sound. Fever, if present, is usually mild. The disease is treatable with antibiotics. For more information about whooping cough, please call the HHSA Immunization Branch at (866) 358-2966, or visit the web site at www.sdiz.org.

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